

# THE MUSICAL WORLD,

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ESSAYS, CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL,

AND WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

“Η μὲν ἀρμονία ἀδρατὸν τι καὶ ἀσώματον,  
καὶ πάγκαλόν τι καὶ θεῖόν ἔστιν.”

PLAT. *Phædo*, sec. xxvi.

Music is a something viewless and incorporeal,  
an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

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It has been frequently said that the true test of the merit of an Opera is the hand-organ. There can be little doubt that it is so of its popularity at least. Yet before we hear the airs of a new Opera at every corner of every street, there is an intermediate process through which they must go, before they can be said to have reached what, in the language of the *Alchymist*, was termed projection. They must be sung on the piano, and danced to at the voicing of flageolet, cornet à piston, and ophicleide. These are indispensable preliminaries, and they may be classed under one happily invented term—arrangement. Now we do not feel called upon to define this term; and besides the thing itself is too well known to require a definition; but we may say generally, that the word includes new fantasias, quadrilles, waltzes, country-dances, allegros, rondos, capriccios, andantes, solos, duetts, quartetts, variations, and that it is doubly the making of musicians giving them both a “local habitation and a name.”

As an instance in proof of our last assertion, we may mention that some years since, being introduced to a professional gentleman of whom we had never heard before, but who we were assured was a delightful composer and deeply-read musician, we asked him to favour us with his company to the first night of a new Opera, produced shortly after we made his acquaintance. We confess that we had our own interest in view; and though very well content to find that he accepted the offer of sharing our order with an eager expression of thanks, any pleasure he might derive was altogether a secondary matter with us. It was our vocation at the time to furnish a report of the said Opera to a morning paper, and we were only too glad to be fortified by the opinions of so profound a judge as we concluded our companion to be. The overture, though we were charmed with it, seemed to disappoint the professor, and therefore were we

afraid to indulge in any expression of approbation lest we should incur the critical sneer of the inexorable judge at our side. Aet succeeded act of the Opera, and the scowl deepened and darkened on his countenance, until at length it wore an expression of intense disappointment and almost of disgust. Not a word had passed between us. We shrank from compromising our judgment, and he appeared to be absorbed in chewing the cud of "bitter fancy." At last came the finale, the curtain fell, and our *ÆACUS*, *MINOS*, and *RHADAMANTHUS*, all in one, turned to us and exclaimed *amaro risu*—"Wretched waste of time, sir; d—n me, if there's a single thing in it that will bring me a farthing. Monstrous poor affair, indeed—not even a waltz to be got out of it, sir!"

This let in a new light upon us—gave us a wrinkle, as the profane say. We comprehended at once that the essential in the composition of an Opera, was to strike out melodies for "an entire new set of quadrilles." The public whose taste was to be studied was a limited, and yet a universal one, being the bands of *WEIPPERT* and *MUSARD*, and the feet of all who are gifted with "the light, fantastic toe."

Next in the scale of Operatic importance to the quadrille and waltz, is the fantasia; an inexhaustible source of emotions to those to whom nature has denied a voice. 'Twere cruel to deprive those who cannot sing of the pleasure of executing new Operas; and at the same time the arranger of the luxury of thinking that he is thinking. The chief blessing of this species of composition is the privilege which it confers on the un-ideaed—since it puts those who have ideas and those who have none on the same footing. Still few things are more difficult than the composition of a good fantasia; not because there is any difficulty in being without ideas, but because the talent of arranging ideas not one's own is a rare and a difficult one.

Arrangement, then, is to Opera what the steam-engine is to commerce. By its means Operas dance over the Alps and back again, run the hays along the Andes, cross *en pantalon* the great wall of China, take *l'été* to either pole, germinate in the piano, bloom in the barrel-organ, and call into existence thousands of musicians who would be *noteless* without.

#### HARMONICS, OR THE ANALOGY OF MUSICAL SOUNDS.

For the following very interesting treatise we are indebted to a recently published work entitled, "Outlines of Analogical Philosophy,"\* which, whatever be the fate of the author's system, is full of materials "to set the mind a-thinking." Embracing the laws of material and immaterial being, tracing them to their first principles, and endeavouring to establish the analogy by which they are linked in one harmonious bond, though the subject is so vast that it will deter many from perusal, yet the mode of its treatment is such as also to invite the many; since the student of each art or science will find his respective pursuit separately treated of, at least so far as the links of a chain may be considered separately, and the

\* *Outlines of Analogical Philosophy: being a Primary View of the Principles, Relations, and Purposes of Nature, Science, and Art.* By *GEORGE FIELD*, Author of an "Essay on the Analogy and Harmony of Colours," &c. Two vols. 8vo. London: *CHARLES TILT*, Fleet Street, 1839.

general reader will not be checked by the use of technical terms, which, as far as possible, are rejected by the author.

By the term HARMONICS, we here denote the science of the relations of *sound, silence, and note*, which science is otherwise called Music, Acoustics, or Phonics, the third and last of the purely Esthetical Sciences, and dependent upon the sense of hearing, as the sister-science of Chromatics is upon vision, and that of Plastics upon touch.

The principles of *sound* and *silence* are in Harmonics, or acoustic science, what those of light and shade are in Chromatics, and also what position and magnitude are in Plastics,—they are the agent and patient, or cause, of all the effects and phenomena of hearing: from the coaction or concurrence of which principles arise all the variety of *note* and sound.

*Sound and silence*, and also their parallel relations, the *acute and grave*, or the *treble and bass*, are correlative extremes in music, as light and shade are in colours, and position and magnitude are in figures; so that, in fact, as declining light is an approach towards darkness, so is the declension of sound, to the grave and bass, an approach toward silence, or the absence or negation of musical sound or *note*. In Harmonics, therefore, we may either deduce the treble, &c., from the bass, or the bass from the treble, indifferently.

As the generator of figure and colour is in each a punctum, or point, so is that of *note*, or tone, a *pulse or point of sound*; and every pulsation of sound, like the plastic and chromatic points, generates and resolves into *three* others, bearing the relations of the *common chord, or chord major* of the musician, by the various combinations of which every musical interval may be determined.

This triunity of sound has been demonstrated in a variety of ways, to the satisfaction of the cultivated ear of the musician, by Mersennus, Wallis, Rammus, Tartini, and others; and it follows that these *three tones of every tone* are resolvable into other like tones, even to the extremest limits of sensation indefinitely, and in a manner perfectly analogous to the like analysis of colours, by which every hue and shade resolves into like triads of primaries to infinity,—every one three, and every three one, in indivisible triunity to infinity, or bounded only by sense.

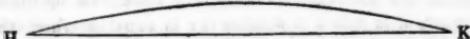
The first of these facts is shewn in the well-known experiments of the monochord, trumpet-marine, &c.; and of the other we have instances in the succession of chords observed issuing from certain sounds generated beneath domes, arches, or in caverns, and in the sympathetic sounds and cadences of the *Æolian* lyre, &c.

The mechanical theory of the sounds of a musical string, or monochord, &c., explains them by the variety of their vibrations or pulsations, and by shewing that different vibrations, which may be sustained separately, may be also sustained simultaneously; and thus accounts mathematically, or through measure, for the variety of the harmonic notes which accompany, or, as we say, constitute, every musical sound, though more apparent to sense in the low or bass, than in the high or treble, tones of instruments.

The simplest of such vibrations takes place when the string, H K of the following figure, assumes the regular harmonic curve, H I K, and pulsates or sounds the full or fundamental note of the string.

Fig. 48.

I



Next in simplicity is that in which a double vibration in opposite directions takes place, dividing the string at the half of its length L, which point, called the Node, is quiescent, and the sound of the string in such case is the *octave* to its fundamental. E. g.

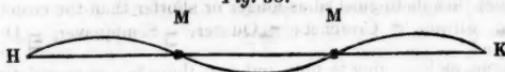
Fig. 49.

L



The next mode is that in which a string vibrates triply in equal parts simultaneously, having two nodes, M M, and the sound of the string in this case is the *fifth* to the fundamental. *E. g.*

Fig. 50.



In like manner, a string vibrating in five equal parts has four nodes, N N N N and yields the sound of the *third* to its fundamental, *e. g. &c.*

Fig. 51.



And the three latter, or three former sounds, each constitute the *common chord*, or notes C E G of the Diatonic scale, being *the primary triad of the musician*.

Every perfect sound, note, or tone, is a system of these three primaries, the *third*, the *fifth*, and the *octave* to the fundamental, in the manner of colours; and as the secondary colours are mediates or compounds of the primaries, so are the other notes of the musical octave mediates or concurrents of the common chord or primary triad of the musician, as illustrated in the above experiment, and the preceding analogous scale of sounds and colours; ascending and descending within limits which are determined only to observation by the perceptive powers of the two senses of vision and hearing. The same may be asserted of all other possible scales and modes of harmonic science.

In such manner is produced and constituted, by derivation or composition, all that infinite variety of sounds which nature and art present to the ear, whether in the melodies and harmonies of natural and artificial music—the numbers, rhythms, and cadences of poetry—the articulations of languages—the cries of animals—in noises or slurred sounds, as distinguished from notes or musical intervals, or in other broken sounds, however produced; equally also in the hum of an insect and the thunder of the storm, and all various as the hues and shades which distinguish visual objects. So much for sound in general, whether it be harmonious, significant, or promiscuous.

Notes or sounds, like colours, have by analogy the three dimensions of figures, *length*, *height*, and *depth*. The measure of length in musical sounds is *time*, height is *acuteness*, and depth is *gravity*; to the two last of which belong tone and tune.

The ratio of division in both time and tone is also geometrical, the length of notes being as 1, 2, 4, 8, &c., or conversely,  $1, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{8}, \text{ &c.}$  And, as intervals of height or depth, they are whole, half, or quarter tones: to express which relations of sound, the musician employs his peculiar well-known characters and notation, wherein there is much indication of triple relation.

In regard to the *length of musical sounds*, simple sounds are significantly denoted by a *point*, thus,  $\bullet$ , which is called a *crotchet*, to which a tail is generally appended downward or upward, thus,  $\text{---} \bullet$ . If the note be longer than a crotchet

it is called a *minim*, and marked thus,  $\text{---} \text{---} \bullet$ , and is equivalent to *two* crotchets.

If it be still longer, it is called a *semibreve*; is equal to *four* crotchets, and is marked thus,  $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \bullet$ , advancing in *duplicate ratio*.

On the other hand, if the note be shorter than a crotchet, it is distinguished by a *hook*, thus,  $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \bullet$ , and called a *quaver*, and is equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a crotchet; if it be still shorter, it is double-hooked, thus,  $\text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \bullet$ , and is called a *semiquaver*, equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a crotchet;

and if a note be yet shorter, it is called a *demisemiquaver*, is

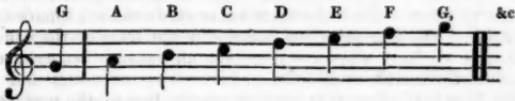
treble hooked, thus , and is equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a crotchet: the whole being in sub-duplicate ratio.

*Silence*, or pause, is measured, in like manner, by equivalent *rests* of the same denomination, thus distinguished as longer or shorter than the crotchet: — *Semibreve*,  *Minim*,  *Crotchet*;  *Quaver*,  *Semiquaver*,  *Demisemiquaver*, &c.

Besides time, as belonging to note and rest, there is compound time, or motion, as applied to musical composition, denoted by the terms *Adagio*, *Largo*, and *Allegro*, which are equally referred to common and triple time.

*Height and depth of musical sounds*, or acuteness and gravity of note or tone, are denoted by the place or position of their characters as high or low, with respect to certain parallel lines called a *Stave*, formed thus:  And all the

variety of note or tone, as determined by nature, and derived from the primary musical triad, is comprehended in the diatonic octave, named after the first letters of the alphabet, A B C D E F G, and are characterised and posited upon the stave in the scale or gamut of the musician thus :



As this scale, or series of note succeeding note, may be continued upward or downward simply by the repetition of the same relations of sound, musicians have extended this scale by *octave above octave*, and stave above stave, distinguishing their position, or relation of acuteness and gravity, by characters called *Claves*, *Clefs*, or *Clifs*, formed as follow :

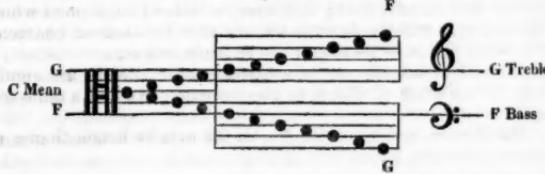
Fig. 52.



the first of which is called the *G* or *treble clef*, or *soprano*; the second, the *C* *tenor*, or *mean*; and the last the *F*, or *bass clef*.

The relations of these in the principal scale of the musician may be represented in the following figure, as ascending and descending from the mean :

Fig. 53.



or in a single series, as in the analogical scale of sounds and colours in the preceding chapter.

It is worthy of remark, that these relations of height and depth, or acuteness and gravity, as *bass*, *mean*, and *treble*, are natural distinctions of the vocal powers of the human species, as *masculine*, *queerine*, and *feminine*; so that harmony, or accompaniment, is an institution of nature as evidently as melody is also.

After what we have thus briefly stated respecting musical sounds, their relations, and the characters by which they are marked and distinguished, it will not be difficult to comprehend the rationale of practice, or the manner in which notes are employed in the *composition* or production of *Melody* or *Air*, Har-

mony or Consonance, and how they run into each other, or combine, symphoniously.

*Melody* is the sweet fluence of sounds, and arises from the orderly arrangement of notes in succession, ascending or descending continuously, or with variety of interval, of time and tune—slowly or swiftly, loudly or silently, softly or harshly, smoothly or abruptly, harmoniously or discordantly; and variously adapted and contrasted, according to the diversity of composition and expression of which sound is susceptible, and by which it should emove the mind through pleasurable sense, and lend its aid to the sentiments of Poetry.

This it is enabled to accomplish through those affinities of sound already described as arising from the common chord or consonance which belongs to the natural constitution of all sound, whence the variety of their unity, and the disunity, dissonance or discord, which have been commonly explained physically and mathematically, but of which we here seek the sensible relations and philosophical analogy.

According to which *there is no perfect harmony, or consonance of sounds, in which either of the three elements of this common chord, or musical triad, answering to the notes C E G of the preceding scale, is wanting, either simply or in relation; and the variety of harmony or consonance depends upon a predominance, or dominance, of one of these, and a subordination, or subdominance, of the other two, in the composition.* The like principle prevails in the harmonizing of colours, in figures, and, as we have shown, throughout all sensible science; and, as we might also show, throughout all science.

It results, from this axiom, that every successive transposition of these notes is distinctly melodious,—that concord is a sense of unity and sufficiency, and discord a sense of divarication and deficiency. Thus each pair, or interchange of sounds of the common chord, or *primary triad*, unites in producing a third sound, and is a distinct concord, whence a *secondary triad*; but each note of the common chord, with any other note out of the chord, is more or less discordant or imperfect.

It follows that the whole scale is made up of alternate concords and discords; that some concords are perfect, such as *thirds* and *fifths*, to any fundamental; that *octaves* and *unisons* are concords, and that octaves differ from unisons only in acuteness or gravity; that *fourths* (or the *diatesseron*, upon which the Greek musicians founded all harmony), are sometimes imperfectly, but in general perfectly concordant in union, and brilliant contrasts in opposition: that *sixths* are as often discords as concords, and that *seconds* and *sevenths* are always discords.

It follows further, therefore, that half and quarter notes, wheter flat or sharp, or what belongs to modern chromatic, serve to augment these harmonies and discords for the sake of expression, and variation of key,—or the ruling, predominating, or fundamental note; that every simple discord may be resolved by the introduction of a third note or notes, and that the modulation from key to key depends upon the same principle: all which relations, accordances, and discordances of musical sounds we have represented, according to a natural and real analogy, to the sense of vision, in the preceding analogous scale of colours and sounds.

Again: *Harmony* in music is the confluence of sweet sounds; and, as distinguished from *Melody*, arises from the accordances of simultaneous sounds: it depends, nevertheless, upon the same principles of accordance and relation as *melody* does. But, beside this relation of counterpoint with succession or melody, *harmony* belongs to, and flows with, the melody it accompanies, has the same theme or subject, and should be itself a subordinate melody, or melodious.

*Harmony*, or music in parts, is, therefore, a *compound melody*, and may consist of many parts, or harmonized melodies compounded, subordinated, and having the same theme, or concurring to the same effect or sentiment, being most perfect when each part is melodious, and subordinated harmoniously in reference to two extremes and a mean.

And, although *harmony* may be extended to any number of parts, it is, both naturally and generally, bounded in practice by the triple scale of the treble, mean, and bass, and is, therefore, perhaps most perfect and effective in three

parts; and within this bound, also, nature has in general confined both the pleasure and the power of the voice and ear.

From what has been said, it appears that *harmony* and *melody* depend upon the same principles and relations, and have the same end; and the confusion which has arisen in the common and technical acceptation of these terms among musicians and writers on harmonics, seems to have sprung from the intimacy and variety of their reciprocal relations, through which *harmony* becomes melodious, and *melody* harmonious.

Hitherto, we have adverted only to the modern diatonic scale of music, in coincidence with its parallel scale of colours in the preceding outline, wherein we have also adduced two other scales, the *secondary* and *tertiary*, of similar relations to the first, and differing therefrom only in die or diesis, or the division and subdivision, or breakings of the original hues or tones; just as two similar musical scales would do in which the one should be founded on *half notes, tones, or mediates*, and the other on *quarter tones, dies, divisions, or dieses*.

These have occasional place in modern music, but they have not distinct regimen or system, independent of the diatonic series or scale, as they had among the Greeks, from whose diatonic genus, although it differs in many respects, the modern scale was probably taken by Guido Aretine, the father of modern music; and in much the same manner, it is probable, the analogous colouring of the Venetian painters was derived, about the same time, from the same source.

Confused and obscure as are the various accounts delivered of musical science as it existed among the ancient Greeks, the following may be clearly collected:—that they regarded *tones* according to a scale ascending or descending, as *high, low, or intermediate*,—treble, bass, or mean,—and similarly according to *time* or *rhythmus*, as *long and short*; and, finally, they distinguished them as *vocal and instrumental, or continuous and discrete*: the first of these, as connecting and blending, infinitely divisible as the colours of the rainbow; the latter as divided by intervals diatonically, &c.

It appears also, that three scales or genera, already adverted to, were recognized by the Greek musician—the *diatonic*, the *chromatic*, and the *enharmonic*; and that, in regard thereto, the note or tone was supposed to be divided into twelve least parts, of which a hemitone contained  $\frac{1}{2}$ , or six; a diesis *trientalis*,  $\frac{1}{3}$ , or four, and a diesis *quadralensis*,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , or three.

We learn further, that the diatonic genus, founded on the natural chord, major, had *two colours* (for so they were called), belonged the diesis of six, or the hemitone; that the chromatic genus had *three colours*, to which belonged the diesis *trientalis* of four duodecimal parts of a tone: and that the enharmonic genus had but *one colour*, to which belonged the diesis *quadralensis* of three duodecimal parts of a tone.

The diatonic is called *the scale of nature*; yet are the shorter intervals of the enharmonic and chromatic genera equally natural, or even more so, as is evident in the warbling of birds, &c., the intervals and scale of which are even more confined and compounded. And it is probable the first music was of these latter kinds irregularly, and that the diatonic was more especially the result of *art, science, and signification*; upon which, again, by an after-refinement and return to nature, the chromatic and enharmonic genera were re-established, improved, and regulated: even, also, as it has been in the natural and artificial scales in the progress of the colourist.

In connexion with their genera, the Greeks had also anciently *three modes* or species of octave, called the *Dorian*, the *Phrygian*, and the *Lydian*, which exceeded each other from grave to acute by the interval of a whole tone, and varied in effect from the solemn and grave to the light and gay.

(To be continued.)

### VIOTTI, OLD BETTS, AND THE STRADUARIUS.

When Viotti, the celebrated performer on the violin, was residing in London, a nobleman (who had during a recent tour in Italy been fortunate enough to meet with and finally purchase a *Straduarius* of the most perfect order) called on him at

his residence for the purpose of receiving instruction. The necessary arrangements having been agreed upon, the "Grand Maestro" speedily returned the visit of his *noble* pupil, and the awful course of study commenced. It was then for the first time that Viotti gained a view of this "*inestimable jewel*" buried as it were in the mire; *Oh! by gar*, exclaimed he to himself, *what shame such beautiful sing must be shut up in de hand of nobody to play him*. It was in vain that he offered money for the instrument; "*milord*" Anglaise would not part with the one, and did not care for the other; and the most he obtained was permission to play on it when, either at a concert or party, the talents of the *maestro* were called in requisition. Viotti was well nigh distracted: first, fearful that any other professor should see and obtain it, or what was even worse, inform his noble pupil of the extraordinary value of the violin, and thus for ever set aside the possibility of obtaining it from the possessor; and secondly, by the fact that wherever he played, unbounded raptures were bestowed on the splendid tones produced, and all parties were ignorantly adding fresh lacerations to the already tortured mind of the *maestro*, by yielding to the instrument those charms, which hitherto had rested solely with himself. Affairs had remained in this state for some time, when lo! the news arrived that the father of "*milord*" had departed this life, and away posts the now unshackled lord of hill and dale to take possession of his paternal halls, not however without first having deposited into the *safe trust* of his master and friend the dearly prized and so much coveted Straduarus, to be by him retained during his absence. It was exactly at this "*turn of the tide*," that Old Betts, as he was called, decided on giving to his son (who had determined on the musical profession) the best masters the time or period afforded. Of course he could not but include, amongst the rest of his preceptors, the then so justly celebrated lion of the day, Viotti. Having concluded, therefore, everything that was necessary, the *young* gentleman waited on his master to receive his first lesson, and commenced by drawing from his case a superb *copy* of a Straduarus, made expressly for him by the *old* gentleman, his father, which, the moment it met the view of the *Grand Maestro*, became fit subject for the following (as the sequel will prove) not uninteresting conversation:—

*Viotti*—Ah! ah! what is dat? by gar, you have Straduarus? how you get him?

*Young Betts*—It is a present from my father, sir.

*Viotti*—From your fazaar? Ah, your fazaar is ver good fazaar; love you ver much to give little shilds de grand Straduarus; cost ver mush money.

*Young B.*—Oh, it did not cost my father anything, sir, with the exception of the wood and the time to make it.

*Viotti*—What de devil you mean? You are make a de shake of me to tell a me zat your fazaar shall make dis violin.

*Young B.*—It's true I assure you, sir; my father has made a great many, and this one being something superior to the rest, why he gave it to me.

*Viotti*—By gar, your fazaar is ver grand fazaar for you, mine leetle shilds; parbleu, he is ver big homme zat make him; mais n'importe pour le present, you shall take a dis lesson; apres, I must see your fazaar for make a me some ting ver great.

During this conversation Viotti had caught at an idea, which he was determined on carrying into execution. Despatching therefore his pupil as soon as decency would permit, he went out, hired a coach, and bade the smiling Jehu drive *so fast as de winds is blow* to the Royal Exchange, attached to the wall of which stood the *ancient store-house of the Betts's*; arriving at the spot, out he jumped, and with him (by accident of course) out jumped his noble pupil's original Straduarus, safely stowed in its neat mahogany case.

*Viotti*—Ah, Mon. Betts, how you do? ver well? dat is good; now I sall tell a to you some tings ver particular; you must know, mon cher Mon. Betts, dat I have ver grand pupil wis ver grand feedle, mais, restez, I show you—dere—what you sink of zat feedle, eh, Mon. Betts?

*Old Betts*—Capital violin, Mr. Viotti—capital—capital indeed—ahem! pray sir, do you happen to know—that is—have you—ahem—any idea who is the maker?

*Viotti*—Ah oui, oui, yes—zat is a copy.

*Old B.*—Oh, it's a copy, is it?

*Viotti*—Oui, zat is a copy d'un Straduarius.

*Old B.*—But—ahem—you'll excuse me, Mr. Viotti, but—ahem—are you quite, quite sure it's a copy?

*Viotti*—Oh yes—oui—I am ver certain for him; it is make par un gentilhomme of Paris—Mons'r—Mons'r—ah, bless me body dat I forget his name; mais n'importe, c'est egal, I am ver sure 'tis only copy.

*Old B.*—Well, Mr. Viotti—ahem—what am I to do with it?

*Viotti*—Why, you sall see, Mr. Betts, zat feedle is ver good feedle, and I should like ver mush to have one make so like him, zat nobody not at all should perceive ze difference between him never, by gar.

*Old B.* (winking his eye at his foreman)—Oh, I know what you mean, Mr. Viotti: you want me to make you a violin in every way, and in each particular, resembling this one that I now hold in my hands—ahem—eh?

*Viotti*—Ah, oui Mon. Betts, dat is him; suppose he have crack, you must crack him de same; suppose him to be scrape off de varnishes, you must scrape his varnishes so mush, dat nobody must tell a de difference never, not at all, jamais.

*Old B.*—You may depend on its being done, Mr. Viotti.

*Viotti*—Ah dat is good, ver good; but when he sall be finnish, Mon. Betts?

*Old B.*—In about three weeks, or a month, I will take care to have it ready for you, or sooner if possible.

*Viotti*—Ver good, ver good; adieu, mon ami, je suis, I am so mush oblige to you, by gar, as you sall never know; adieu—adieu.

And away went Viotti, perfectly well satisfied with the arrangement he had effected, the ultimate conclusion of which no doubt our readers can guess at as well as we can inform them; it was this:—the grand maestro had not the slightest idea but that he could with ease and safety pass off the *counterfeit violin* on “*milord*” whilst he himself was determined to retain possession of the *genuine*; but, as the old proverb has it, “*there is many a slip*,” &c. In short, Viotti could not have fixed upon a worse person than Betts to aid him, even “*behind a cloud*,” as he vainly imagined it to be; for the old gentleman’s penetration soon discovered, or what was probably as good, soon *imagined* the true motive for the new violin being thus so suddenly, as it were, called into existence; therefore, said he, as it is pretty evident that “*milord*” is *not* to have the original, why Mr. Viotti may just as well put up with a copy, as it is plain his lordship is destined to do. It may not be perhaps the most honourable course to pursue, but if foxes will fall into the snares they have prepared for others, why that’s no fault of mine—here Fent—

*Fent* (his foreman)—Yes, sir.

*Old B.*—Here Fent, take this Strad—ahem—and d’ye hear, make for me as soon as possible, at least within a month, two violins—ahem—understand me now, two violins precisely the same—pattern, varnish, in short I want you to cheat and deceive even me if you can.

*Fent*—That will be rather a difficult job, Mr. Betts; however, I’ll try my best.

*Old B.*—Well, well, the best can do no more; so about it directly, as I have promised to finish them within a given time.

Suffice it to say, the violins were made and distributed in the following order: “*milord*” had a *copy*, Viotti a *copy*, and old Arthur Betts retained the *original*. It is true, *Il Grand Maestro* had his suspicions, but he never dared declare them, except when by accident he happened to meet the *elder fox of the two*, he would exclaim,

*Viotti*—Ah! ah! Mon. Betts, ver good copy, ver good indeed; mais, not ver good feedle—I tink too new—eh, Mon. Betts, better by and bye, long time to come—eh?

*Old B.*—New violins require age, Mr. Viotti; but do you know that it strikes me—ahem—some mistake—ahem—understand me?

*Viotti*—By gar, I tink so too; ver mush mistake.

*Old B.*—Yes, but not on my part though.

*Viotti*—What you mean, Mon. Betts? you mean to say I make mistake? by gar, I never mistake nobody, jamais.

*Old B.*—I'll be bound you've made one this time.

*Viotti*—How so, sare?

*Old B.*—Why now I'll bet my existence—ahem!

*Viotti*—Well—

*Old B.*—*That you sent home the wrong fiddle.*

*Viotti*—Ah! ah! ver good, ver clever; Mon. Betts, you are ver great, clever man to be sure. Bless me body it is past a two o'clock—it must dat I go! adieu, mon ami, adieu!

And away he would shuffle from the presence of one he felt he had good cause to fear. Soon after this, from some reason *hid behind the curtain*, Viotti was obliged to fly from England. Soon after he died.

At the time this was related to us, all the original actors of the scene had "departed never to return," and this story has now become an excellent joke; certainly when we reflect that either way his lordship would have been the sufferer, we are induced to look at it as an excellent joke ourselves.

#### A WORD OR TWO ON CONCERT PITCH.

It has long been a matter of surprise and regret, among the musicians of all countries, that some standard has not been adopted, whereby the proper pitch of musical instruments of all kinds may be ascertained and fixed. And perhaps it never was felt to be so requisite as at the present moment, when the whims and intrigues of pianoforte makers raise the pitch of their instruments, some a half tone to give brilliancy and richness of tone, and some a whole tone above what is denominated *chamber pitch*; caring not, nor thinking what havoc they make among singers, as long as it answers the purpose of creating a demand for their instruments. If I was a conductor, I would never use, or allow to be used in a concert room, a pianoforte that was above concert pitch; for no one but a singer knows the distress it occasions him to be obliged to sing to an instrument half a note above the common standard of the orchestra.

It is well known that organs are generally a quarter of a tone below even chamber pitch, and this may be accounted for, perhaps, from the *temperature* to which of necessity organs are liable, from their exposed situations; and this *temperature* makes it the more necessary that a certain pitch should be adhered to in organs, or else, if raised too high, the heat of summer would cause them to be so sharp, as that it would be almost impossible to sing to them. The natural altitude of the tenor voice is A flat, which the singer can generally produce with a full *chest tone*; but, in consequence of the composers frequently writing to A natural, and sometimes even to B flat, the singer to gain his daily bread, is obliged to force his voice above what nature has pointed out to be his full chest compass, or else he must call to his aid the falsetto; and what is the consequence? Why, he ruins his voice, and shortens the period of his vocal usefulness. Should not the human voice, then, be the first consideration with all musical professors, who have the conducting of these things? for voices have a limit pointed out by nature, over which limit, whether above or below, if they are strained, or forced by the injudicious master, or by the accompaniment of instruments, it must of necessity be very injurious to them. To show the further necessity of a fixed pitch,—how often does it happen that a singer asks another, who has just sung, "Well, how is the pitch?"—Sometimes the remark is, "dreadfully sharp!" or "horribly flat"—and thus is a singer agitated, and unfit to perform with that credit, or ease, which he would naturally feel if he knew that there could be no variation from a standard, to which all orchestras would gladly adhere, if such a thing was made a fixed rule, and forks were stamped—"Philharmonic pitch;" or any other pitch that might be adopted by general consent.

It is very true that singers do sometimes attempt to lay the blame of their own defects upon the orchestra, or accompanist, in other instances than want of intonation; but if it was given out as a fixed rule that concert pitch was reduced to a certain standard, any defect of intonation must necessarily fall upon the singer!—Unfortunately, there are very few singers who have common sense

enough to keep within the boundary which nature has prescribed for them. The tenor must sing bass, and the bass, tenor. The treble wants to sing alto, and the alto, treble. But true genius will seldom overstep the range which nature has dictated; and it falls to the lot of but few persons to be gifted with a great compass of voice, and at the same time to have an equality of tone in all parts. This remark will equally apply to both instrument and singer; for where artificial means are employed to increase the natural compass of either, a visible defect is observable in both; so true it is that "nature unadorned is adorned the most." —And it is very questionable whether it can be called the intellect of any science when by gaining one point, another is lost. High pitch is as injurious to stringed instruments as it is to the human voice; see how the pianoforte maker is obliged to strengthen the case of his instrument to bear the immense pressure of the present high pitch!—But instruments of the violin tribe can have no such assistance; consequently, they frequently lose their tone, and become much deteriorated.

How often it happens in our day that composers overstep the modesty of nature, by writing passages for wind instruments and voices so completely at variance with the capability of both, that when they are attempted to be performed by any but first-rate artists, they become perfectly ludicrous. The most effective, and consequently the most pleasing part of both voices and instruments, is that which can be produced with the most ease; and we find that writers, such as Weber, Haydn, Mozart, Purcell, and other men of true genius, seldom wrote what could not be accomplished both with ease and effect. There are composers, however, who set at nought the convenience or abilities of the performer, caring for nothing but the vagaries of their own nonsense, which they would fain palm upon the world for music; for can the scrambling over a certain number of notes in a given time, à la Herz, be called music? But we would fain hope that a better state of things is approaching, and that *good music* will in future bear the sway.

## THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

In a review of Bucke on the "Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature," in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, there is the following passage:—"All our readers not living north of Lincolnshire, or west of Wiltshire, have heard the nightingale; but none have ever read their written song in Mr. Bucke's work, which we give as a curiosity. It was made by a German composer on a bird esteemed as a capital singer."

## CONCERT OVERTURES FOR THE ORCHESTRA.

(From the German of R. Schumann.)

J. J. H. VERHULST. W. STERNDALE BENNETT. BERLIOZ.—Chance has brought together these three names, the bearers of which may be considered as the representatives of the younger generation (at least) of artists in three distinct nations, viz., Holland, England, and France. The name of the third is well known, the second is beginning to be appreciated, and the first has become less strange, from frequent mention, in our *Zeitschrift*.\* They may be reviewed

\* The Neue Zeitschrift für Musik.

together, and will, if we mistake not, gain an important place in the musical history of their respective countries.

The overtures which I am about to notice I have not, I am sorry to say, heard from the orchestra. However, my acquaintance with nearly all the rest of the works of these composers, as well as with the composers themselves (at least with the first two), makes up for the deficiency, and perhaps qualifies me to pass a judgment. Berlioz promises yearly to come to Germany, and thus to make us more familiar with his music; he has, in the meanwhile, sent us a new overture, which is a new testimony of his remarkable tendencies.

Holland, formerly only celebrated for painters, has lately distinguished herself by an active taste for music. A great influence may have been exercised by the "Society for the Encouragement of Music," which has spread through the country in a hundred ramifications, and has for its aim the encouragement of native as well as German music. Verhulst is a protégé of that society and has, if I mistake not, gained the prize in many contests. He is among us (i.e. at Leipsic) at present, and last winter acquired a good name as a director, from his conducting the concerts of the Euterpean Society. To the Dutch society we are indebted for the edition of some of Verhulst's works, and we have already noticed in the *Zeitschrift* a church piece (*Kirchen stück*) and overture as works decidedly felicitous. A new overture lies before us, composed to introduce "Gyshecht von Amstel," a well-known Dutch tragedy, to which Velhurst also composed *Entr'actes*. The overture, often heard at Leipsic, gave great satisfaction, and could not fail of doing so; it is an overture for all—for the public, the musician, and the critic—and stands at that degree of universally appreciated cultivation which gains the esteem of the multitude and the sympathy of the artist. From the rocks that often threaten young artists, from experiments and temptations, he has been preserved by some friendly spirit; he knows his way, and does not venture where success might be doubtful. Knowledge of his own power, which power is of a pretty high grade, together with liveliness and cheerfulness, distinguish this very uncommon specimen of a Dutchman as a man, if one would construe him according to his musical works. As a musician he has that instinct in instrumentation which has not to choose between two ways, but pounces at once on the right. He chiefly delights in masses of sound, which he well understands how to arrange and set in motion, while he keeps an attentive eye on the details. Having good masters before his eyes, he labours rather to produce beneficial and universally acknowledged effects, than those that are new and uncommon. The overture before us is some years old, and must not be regarded as a final result of his efforts. Talents like his do not make rapid, but so much the more sure progress! industry, circumspection, intercourse with masters, and public encouragement, have operated favourably, and there is no doubt that the young trunk will every year bear riper and richer fruit. As the roots spread towards a German soil, the blossoms will extend over a land which has already given support and strength to so many great musicians, and as in poetry we regard foreigners like Chamisso, Oehlenschläger, &c., as our own countrymen, so likewise may we greet Verhulst as an honorary member of the German brotherhood, which we heartily hope will perpetually increase.

In this number we would include Bennett, though he stands more separated as an Englishman, and just as we have reclaimed Handel from the English as one of our own, the English might afterwards demand back Bennett as belonging to them, though I by no means intend to set up a comparison between Bennett and Handel. The latest overture by Bennett is called the "Wood Nymph," and this name is, I think, the only unfortunate thing about it. I know that it is impossible to annoy a composer more than by finding fault with the name of his offspring, since, according to his own opinion, he ought to know best what he designed, and moreover the name "Wood Nymph" may be explained by his former overture, the "Naiades," to which he wished to give a companion. Still this title is neither striking nor advantageous to the work; and though it is poetical to represent a fundamental idea by a single individual connected with that idea, as is the case with Mendelssohn's "Melusine," still that does not apply here, and I should have preferred some such general title as "Overture Pastorale." Setting aside this secondary matter, which however, as I have said,

operates unfavourably, the overture by its wondrously tender, languishing structure, stands far above its predecessors, and breathes the purest poetic life. A piano edition does not generally allow of a decisive judgment, but such is not the case here, as I have been informed by competent authorities. Bennett is principally a pianist, and though well skilled in the use and choice of his instruments, his favourite piano ever peers through his orchestral compositions, and at last something beautiful operates in a diminished form, as a lovely thought from the mouth of a child.

Indeed, the overture is charming, and with the exception of Spohr and Mendelssohn I know of no living composer who is such a master in delicacy and softness of colouring as Bennett. I will even forget that he has taken much from those two artists, while admiring the excellence of the whole, and it seems to me that he has never so much displayed *himself* as in this work. Examine it bar by bar—what a delicate yet firm texture from the beginning to the end! Instead of huge gaps starting forth from the creations of others, all here is closely interwoven. One fault, however, has been found with this overture, namely, that it is too much in detail; but a finishing off to the very minutest details is the feature, more or less, of all Bennett's compositions. He is given to repetition, and repeats note by note after the conclusion of the middle movement. However, let any one attempt to alter, without spoiling, and he will not succeed, for Bennett is no mere scholar, and what he has conceived stands fast, and is not to be disturbed.

It does not belong to Bennett's *naïve*, tender poetic character, and the direction which such a character must take, to set immense levers and forces in motion; magnificence is foreign to him, for where his fancy loves to dwell, namely, on a lonely sea coast or in a retired greenwood, one does not catch hold of drums and trumpets to express one's felicity. Let him be taken as he is, not as that which he does not even seek to be; not as the creator of a new epoch, or an unrestrainable hero, but as a tender, genuine poet, who caring little for the waving of a hat, more or less, pursues his quiet way, at the end of which no triumphal car awaits him, but a wreath of violets from a grateful hand, with which Eusebius\* here would crown him.

Other wreaths are sought by Berlioz, that raging bacchant, that terror of the Philistines, who take him for a shaggy monster with devouring eyes. But where do we find him now? By a crackling chimney, in a Scotch manor-house, among hunters, dogs, and laughing country girls. An overture to "Waverley" lies before me, to Sir W. Scott's romance, which, with its charming prolixity, its romantic freshness, its truly English stamp, I like better than all the modern foreign romances. To this Berlioz has composed music. "To which chapter, which scene, on what account, for what end?" we shall be asked, for critics always want to know what the composer himself cannot tell, and often understand scarcely the tenth part of what they talk about. However, in the present case, the motto in the title page gives some solution:—

" Dreams of love and lady's charms,  
Give place to honor and to arms."

This brings us near the track, but at the moment I wished for nothing but an orchestra to play the overture, and the world of readers to sit round and examine it with their own eyes. It would be easy for me to describe this composition, either poetically by a copy of the pictures it raised before me, or by a dissection of the mechanism. There is something in both methods of describing music, and the first at least lacks the dryness, into which the second falls, whether for well or ill. In a word, Berlioz's music must be heard; a sight of the score will not suffice, and we strive in vain to render it sensible on the piano. Often the point is given by effects depending on volume of sound, often by strange veilings (Umhüllungen), which even a practised ear cannot get a clear idea of from a mere sight of the notes on paper. If we examine the single thoughts fundamentally, they often appear trivial and common-place as taken by themselves; but the whole has for me an irresistible charm, in spite

\* This involves some mystery—this "Eusebius,"—which, perhaps, Mr. W. S. Bennett understands.—ED.

of much that offends me, and which is unfamiliar to a German ear. Berlioz has shown himself different in every one of his works, and people doubt whether he should be called a genius or daring adventurer. He glitters like a flash of lightning, but also leaves a smell of sulphur behind. He puts forth mighty phrases and truths and then falls back into the mere bubble of the schools. To those who are not beyond the first step of musical cultivation and feeling (that is to say the great majority) he must appear like a madman, as well as to the musicians by profession, who pass nine-tenths of their life in the mere commonplaces, aye, doubly so to them, for he requires more than any of his predecessors. Hence the repugnance against his compositions: hence years pass away before one finds its way to a complete performance. However, this overture to "Waverley" will have an easier path, for the romance and the character of the hero are well known, and nothing can be plainer than the motto. I wish the overture had been printed and heard in Germany, for his music could only injure a talent so weak that better works could not improve it. I should mention that, strange to say, the overture has a remote similarity to Mendelssohn's "Meeres stille." A remark of Berlioz in the title page of the overture marked *Opus I.* is not to be passed over, in which he states that he has destroyed his first printed *Opus I.* (eight scenes of "Faust"), and wishes the "Waverley" overture to be considered as the first work. Who will answer for it, that the second *Opus I.* may not cease to please him by-and-bye? Therefore let people make as much haste as possible to learn the work, which in spite of all juvenile weaknesses is, for greatness and peculiarity, the most remarkable instrumental composition that has lately reached us from abroad.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editor of the Musical World.*

Sir,—In relation to an advertisement in your last Numbers of the Musical World, respecting a Prize offered for a Glee for *equal* voices—can you inform me what is meant by that same?—a Glee for four basses would be a perfect curiosity. Yours's, &c.

London, Aug. 12.

A CONSTANT READER & A MUSICAL STUDENT.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

**MORI'S AGE.**—There are many different opinions regarding the late Mr. Mori's age; we have it from the best authority, that he was born on the 24th of January, 1796, consequently he was in his 44th year when he died. Many persons thought Mori much older than he was, owing to his having been so many years before the public. He performed a concerto on the violin, in 1804, thirty-five years ago, when he was only eight years old; and it may naturally be concluded that there are scarcely any *ladies* old enough to remember so far back as that period, although some of them will contend that our lamented violinist was fifty years old, for, say they, "we have heard grandmamma speak of him as being a prodigy, when we were quite young."

**MR. PATEY** has been unanimously elected a member of the Royal Society of Musicians.

**MUSARD** is about to give up his concerto in the Rue Vivienne. So say the French papers, and we say that a good speculation will thus be opened to some one of our own musicians.—*Credit Judæus.*

**SPOHR'S NEW ORATORIO.**—There was a private rehearsal of Spohr's oratorio on Monday morning at the Hanover Square Rooms, under the direction of Mr. E. Taylor; the music is spoken of as very fine, but rather heavy and sombre.

**ROSSINI AND PETTINI.**—The excellency of Rossini as a composer was universally acknowledged both in England and on the continent. A gentleman whom I once met told me the following anecdote. During his residence in Milan, where he lived many years ago, he became acquainted with one Petini a young man of nineteen years; of no fortune or connexions, but of considerable genius in

painting, and more in music, in which his imagination and enthusiasm promised that he would be a master. He had heard little modern music, and none of Rossini's, to whose style however, his own nearly approximated. On Rossini's "La Pietra del Paragone," being brought out at the Scala, my informant accompanied Pettini to witness it. He said nothing during the representation, and on coming away continued silent and melancholy. Two days afterwards, his friend found him hard at work at his easel, without any traces of music about him. "Ah!" said he, "you see me! I have abandoned music—there can be only one composer in that style, and he (meaning Rossini) was born a year before me?"—*Ebers' Seven Years.*

**MORI'S WILL.**—It is not correct, as has been stated, that Mr. Mori left his property to his three daughters, to the exclusion of his two sons; the fact is, he left it to his five children, share and share alike; and the business to be offered to Mr. Lavenu (Mrs. Mori's son by her first husband), at a fair valuation; and in case of his not agreeing to take it, it will be sold.

**BRAHAM** has been singing with very great success at Dublin.

Connected with the history of the fiddle in England, there is a curious old custom, now "invisble, or dimly seen," and I know not when commenced, which is thus described in Hone's Table Book:—The concluding dance at a country wake, or other general meeting, is the "Cushion Dance;" and if it be not called for when the company are tired with dancing, the fiddler, who has an interest in it, which will be seen hereafter, frequently plays the tune to remind them of it. A young man of the company leaves the room, the poor young women, uninformed of the plot against them, suspecting nothing; but he no sooner returns, bearing a cushion in one hand and a pewter pot in the other, than they are aware of the mischief intended, and would certainly make their escape, had not the bearer of cushion and pot, aware of the invincible aversion which young women have to be saluted by young men, prevented their flight by locking the door and putting the key in his pocket. The dance then begins. The young man advances to the fiddler, drops a penny in the pot, and gives it to one of his companions. Cushion then dances round the room, followed by pot, and when they again reach the fiddler, the cushion says, in a sort of recitative, accompanied by the music, "This dance it will no farther go." The fiddler, in return, sings or says (for it partakes of both) "I pray, kind sir, why say you so?" The answer is, "Because Joan Sanderson won't come to." "But," replies the fiddler, "she must come to, and she shall come to, whether she will or no." The young man, thus armed with the authority of the village musician, recommences his dance round the room, but stops when he comes to the girl he likes best, and drops the cushion at her feet. She puts her penny in the pewter pot, and kneels down with the young man on the cushion, and he salutes her. When they rise, the woman takes up the cushion and leads the dance, the man following, and holding the skirt of her gown; and, having made the circuit of the room, they stop near the fiddler, and the same dialogue is repeated, except that, as it is now the woman who speaks, it is *John* Sanderson who won't come to, and the fiddler's mandate is issued to *him*, not her. The woman drops the cushion at the feet of her favourite man: the same ceremony and the same dance are repeated, till every man and woman (the pot-bearer last) have been taken out, and all have danced round the room in a file. The pence are the perquisite of the fiddler. There is a description of this dance in Miss Hutton's "Oakwood Hall."—*Dubourg.*

**DR. MORELL**, who wrote Oratorios for Handel, took, on one occasion, the liberty to suggest to him, in the most respectful manner, that the music he had set to some lines of his was quite opposite to the sense of the words. Instead of taking this friendly hint as he ought to have done, from one who (although not a Pindar) was, at least, a better judge of poetry than the musician, he looked upon the advice as insulting to his talents, and cried out with all the violence of affronted pride, "Vat! you teach me music? De music be good music. Dom your words! Here (thrumming his harpsichord), here be my idea; go you make word to dat."

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M'odi, ah! m'odi, io non t'imploro	Aria	S.
Bando, bando a si triste immagin	Duetto	S.S.
Onde a lei ti mostri grato	Aria	S.
Vieni la mia vendetta	Aria	S.
Guai! se ti sfugga	Terzetto	S.T.B.

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Qui di mie pene un Angelo	Duetto	T.B.
• Si del chiosco penitente	Cavatina	S.
Talor nel mio delirio	Aria	T.
Fonte d'amaré lagrime	Duetto	S.B.
Onde riedi? che mal brami	Ditto	T.B.
Mostro iniquo, tremar in dovevi	Ditto	S.B.

\* These Airs are arranged for the Harp by J. B. Chatterton.

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E' larva che di leguasi—(La Rimembranza)	Duetto	S.C.
Trascor ser venti lune—(Le Spose dei Crociati)	Duetto	S.S.
Oggi quà domani là—(Le Zingare)	Duetto	S.S.

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